

bill, I don't know where it stands, I don't think it's on the agenda right now, but at least it's an up front issue. If you want to do something for the private schools, give them tuition tax credit. It's very deliberate, it's very visible, it's saying as a body here that we want to make an effort to help defray the cost to those people because they do pay their property taxes, their income taxes and their sales taxes that do support the public schools. And if we want to recognize that that is an additional burden, then we ought to say it publicly, make a policy statement, let's give them a break on their taxes for it. That issue has been before us, I assume it will be with us again. But this is not near as deliberate, this is not near as visible, this is not near as quantifiable, and yet it has the same impact. I think it's an important decision that you're going to make. If the legislative will is that you do want to pursue this program of having public taxpayer's dollars funding private schools, then so be it. I will abide by the will of the Legislature, I have no choice, obviously. But I think it's important when you make the vote on this that you realize that it's not just 150 or 125 thousand dollars for an ongoing program, it's a definite, brand new, for our body, for the last 18 years it's a new policy decision, and I think when you make the vote you ought to be aware of that.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Rogers, please, followed by Senator Hall.

SENATOR ROGERS: Mr. President and members, I guess I'm a little confused on some of the comments that I've been hearing here this morning. I'd like to read two or three lines from a letter that was received this morning from Father Dawson. It just gives you some of the figures, it states that 3,000 students, in Lincoln Catholic and elementary schools, the per pupil cost in Lincoln public schools is \$3,300 in elementary, and is about \$4,300 for secondary. If this program would advance the way Senator Hall has it drafted now it would probably amount to about \$3 per child for the Catholic students, and I'm just talking about Lincoln, Nebraska. Senator Hannibal said we should know exactly where and how this money is going to spent. You tried to tell me that we always know in this body how and where and when every dollar is going to be spent, I don't believe that is so. Senator Hannibal, I'd like to ask you a question.

PRESIDENT: Senator Hannibal, please.